GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1432
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2015
Forest Areas
Patel Shri Prahlad Singh

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of the National Afforestation Programme (NAP) as well as the National Mission for a Green India;
(b) whether the Government is aware that forest areas in the country are diminishing due to encroachment and human activities and if so, the estimated loss of forest areas in the country, State-wise;
(c) whether the Government is considering to undertake the NAP programme in collaboration with the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) for generating rural employment opportunities;
(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
(e) whether the Government proposes to have a digital mapping of forest areas/cover of the country and physical numbering/marking of trees where encroachment and deforestation usually takes place and if not, the reasons therefor;
(f) the estimated expenditure for the Green India Mission annually along with the funds allocated for each State/UT and projected reduction/neutralisation of Green House Gases(GHGs) through forestation across the country; and
(g)the other steps taken by the Government to increase the forest areas/cover in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a)The Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) is implementing two major Centrally Sponsored Schemes(CSSs) on afforestation, namely National Afforestation Programme (NAP) Scheme and the Green India Mission (GIM) which are implemented in participatory mode under Joint Forest Management (JFM) approach. Under NAP, an area of over 2 million hectares has been sanctioned for afforestation since its inception in the year 2000. GIM aims to increase forest & tree cover on 5 million hectare area and to improve eco-system services & also quality of forest cover on another 5 million hectare area by the end of 13th Plan period.

(b)The Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun assesses the forest cover of the country at the interval of two years. As per India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2013, there is a net increase of 5871 sq km. in the forest cover as compared to the previous assessment of 2011, which can be attributed to afforestation, conservation measures, management interventions etc. The State-wise details of forest cover are given in Annexure-I.
(c) & (d) NAP and GIM have implementation linkages with MGNREGS at the district level. Under MGNREGS also, afforestation in degraded forest lands in the States is undertaken. As per the information available, about 45,000 hectares of such afforestation has been taken up during the last three years which has also contributed in generating rural wage employment for the local people.
(e) The MoEF&CC is alive to the significance of digital mapping of forest areas in controlling encroachments & illicit tree cutting and has taken up this issue with the State Forest Departments to complete the exercise on priority. 13 major States have completed digitization of forest boundaries and provided the data to FSI, Dehradun for forest cover mapping.
(f)GIM envisages an annual additional carbon dioxide sequestration to the tune of 55 to 60 million tonnes upto 2020. The State-wise details for release of funds are given at Annexure-II.

(g) Afforestation being a cross-sectoral programme, is also taken up under various other Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) such as Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), National Bamboo Mission, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) etc. and also under different plan/non-plan schemes of the States.

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